

CLAIMS

1. In a computer system, a method of presenting information associated with a hierarchy comprising the steps of:

5 creating a first display area, said first display area displaying a first node of said hierarchy;

 creating a second display area, said second display area presenting a plurality of child nodes of said first node;

 performing the following when one of said plurality of child nodes in said second display area is selected:

10 updating said first display area to include said one of said plurality of child nodes; and

 updating said second display area to display a plurality of nodes in place of said plurality of child nodes, said plurality of nodes being the child nodes of said selected child node.

15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said hierarchy comprises a file system.

 3. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of updating said first display area further comprises the steps of:

20 performing the following when said first node is selected in said first display area:

 removing said one of said child nodes from said first display area; and

updating said second display area to display said plurality of child nodes.

4. The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of placing the cursor over said one of said child nodes in said second display area.

5 5. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of updating said second display area further comprising the steps of:

determining whether said child node is a leaf node of said hierarchy;
and
removing said second display area, if said child node is a leaf node.

10 6. The method of claim 1 wherein a size of said first display area is independent of a size of said second display area.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of updating said second display area further comprises the step of placing a marquee over said one of said child nodes of said selected child node.

15 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising said step of displaying a marquee over said one of said child nodes in said second display.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of moving said marquee one entry in said second display area in response to arrow key
20 input.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein said marquee is positioned over said one of said child nodes, said method further comprising the step of selecting said one of said child nodes in response to right arrow key input.

11. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

5 receiving character input;

adding said character input to a search criteria;

repositioning a cursor on said one of said plurality of child nodes in response to said character input, said one of said plurality of child nodes resembling said search criteria.

10 12. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of performing further comprises the steps of:

determining whether there is unused display space in said first display area;

15 performing the following when there is unused display space in said first display area:

resizing said first display area to eliminate said unused display space;

expanding said second display area to include said unused display space.

20 13. A hierarchical information browser comprising:

a computer system having a processor and memory;

a process executing in said computer;

a first display area controlled by said process, said first display area having a plurality of entries that identify a selected path through said hierarchical information;

5 a second display area controlled by said process, said second display area having a plurality of path choices of said hierarchical information.

14. The hierarchical information browser of claim 13 wherein a size of said first display area is independent of a size of said second display area.

10 15. The hierarchical information browser of claim 13 wherein said first display area is limited to a maximum size.

16. The hierarchical information browser of claim 15 wherein a scrolling mechanism is activated when said first display area reaches said maximum size.

17. An computer program product comprising:

15 a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein for presenting information associated with a hierarchy comprising:

20 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to create a first display area, said first display area displays a first node of said hierarchy;

computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to create a second display area, said second display area presenting a plurality of child nodes of said first node;

5 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to perform the following when one of said plurality of child nodes in said second display area is selected:

computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to update said first display area to include said one of said plurality of child nodes; and

10 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to update said second display area to display a plurality of nodes in place of said plurality of child nodes, said plurality of nodes being the child nodes of said selected child node.

15 18. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said hierarchy comprises a file system.

19. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to update said first display area further comprising:

20 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to execute the following when said first node is selected in said first display area:

computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to remove said one of said child nodes from said first display area; and

computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to update said second display area to display said plurality of child nodes.

20. The computer program product of claim 19 further comprising
5 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to place a cursor over said one of said child nodes in said second display area.

21. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to update said second display area further comprising:

10 computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to determine whether said child node is a leaf node of said hierarchy; and
computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to remove said second display area, if said child node is a leaf node.

22. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein a size of
15 said first display area is independent of a size of said second display area.

23. In a computer system, a method of presenting information associated with a hierarchy comprising the steps of:

updating a first display area to include a first node of said hierarchy in response to said selection of said first node in a second display; and
20 updating said second display to display a plurality of child nodes of said first node.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein said hierarchy comprises at least one element of a file system.

25. The method of claim 23 further comprising the steps of:

reallocating a portion of said first display area to said second display
5 area when said portion of said first display area is unused.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein said step of updating said second display area further comprises the steps of:

removing said second display area, if said first node is a leaf node.

27. The method of claim 23 further comprising the steps of:

10 removing said first node of said hierarchy in response to a selection in said first display of a parent node of said first node;

updating said second display to display a plurality of child nodes of said parent node, said plurality of child nodes including said first node.